

# *Much Ado About Nothing*

## Act II, Scene i

Note: There are nine roles: LEONATO (1 line), PRINCE PEDRO (4 lines), HERO (3 lines), BENEDICK (9 lines), MARGARET (3 lines), BALTHASAR (2 lines), URSULA (4 lines), SIGNIOR ANTONIO (3 lines), and BEATRICE (8 lines).

### Script

*Leonato and Antonio are alone on stage.*

LEONATO The revelers are entering, brother. Make good room.

*Leonato and Antonio move backward.*

*Music. Enter all others to background, dancing, all in masks.*

*Prince Pedro and Hero step forward.*

PRINCE, *to Hero* Lady, will you walk a bout with your friend?

HERO So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk, and especially when I walk away.

PRINCE With me in your company?

HERO I may say so when I please.

PRINCE And when please you to say so?

HERO When I like your favor

PRINCE Speak low if you speak love.

*Music. They move back.*

*Benedick and Margaret move forward.*

BENEDICK, *to Margaret* Well, I would you did like me.

MARGARET So would not I for your own sake, for I have many ill qualities.

BENEDICK Which is one?

MARGARET I say my prayers aloud.

BENEDICK I love you the better; the hearers may cry "Amen."

MARGARET God match me with a good dancer.

*Music. Benedick moves back.*

*Balthasar moves forward.*

BALTHASAR Amen.

MARGARET And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done. Answer, clerk.

BALTHASAR No more words.

*They move back.*

*Ursula and Antonio move forward.*

URSULA I know you well enough. You are Signior Antonio.

ANTONIO At a word, I am not.

URSULA I know you by the waggling of your head.

ANTONIO To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

URSULA You could never do him so ill-well unless you were the very man. You are he, you are he.

ANTONIO At a word, I am not.

URSULA Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he. Graces will appear, and there's an end.

*They move back.*

*Benedick and Beatrice move forward.*

BEATRICE Will you not tell me who told you so?

BENEDICK No, you shall pardon me.

BEATRICE Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BENEDICK Not now.

BEATRICE That I was disdainful! Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BENEDICK What's he?

BEATRICE I am sure you know him well enough.

BENEDICK Not I, believe me.

BEATRICE Did he never make you laugh?

BENEDICK I pray you, what is he?

BEATRICE Why, he is the Prince's jester, a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders. None but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit but in his villainy, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet.

BENEDICK When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

BEATRICE Do, do.

*Music for the dance.*

BEATRICE We must follow the leaders.

*Music. Dance. Then exit all.*